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AUTHOR Freeman, G. Ronald
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ABSTRACT

This teacher's guide suggests strategies to be used for teaching conversation in a second language. The small-group method is advocated where the students present the same conversational activity several times, thus reinforcing skills. The underlying philosophy is that the students are responsible for the success of class discussions and group conversation. The activities discussed can be adapted or modified as appropriate for each class and for the teaching style of the instructor. The methods are discussed in six sections: audiovisual strategies; communicative games; interview and questionnaires; values clarification; role playing and problem solving; and potpourri. References cited in the text are included in a bibliography at the conclusion of the activities list. (NCR)

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G. RONALD FREEMAN

California State University, Fresno

101+

Ways to Stimulate Conversation in a Foreign Language

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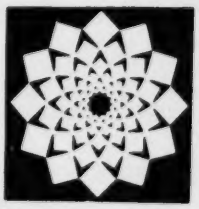

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Introduction

The paradox of second-language conversation classes is that students seem eager to enroll, but reluctant to participate. Perhaps the answer to the problem lies in a reexamination of the conversational strategies employed in teaching conversation in a second language.

Recent years have shown highly significant changes in the materials used in second-year conversation and reading classes. A decade ago, literary selections served as the basis for most class 'discussions.' About five years ago, a new trend started to appear. Perhaps recognizing the difficulty of stimulating 'conversation' based on short stories and poetry selections, textbook writers began to explore the possibilities that social issues and contemporary topics offered. Discussion now seems far easier to generate. Students appear much more willing and anxious to discuss abortion and politics than they did to comment on a poem of Machado or Rubén Darío. As a profession, we have shifted our subject matter in conversation classes to the point that it parallels in part the interests and areas of concern of our students.

Similar changes are being advocated concerning methods. The traditional, professor-centered classroom is under attack and has been for some time. Some educators now recommend completely individualized systems of instruction. Others see advantages and benefits in the small-group system, where students collectively learn and share. In my conversation classes, I have found the small-group method to work excellently. The advantages seem to outweigh the weaknesses. Students seem less reluctant to speak; they mention "not being on the spot in front of the entire class." When combined with some method of group rotation, the small-group technique affords the opportunity for students to present the same 'speech' or conversational activity several times, thus reinforcing oral skills. The key to success in small-group teaching, to my way of thinking, is for the instructor to be a 'shadow leader'--providing stimulating conversational activities and following through with adequate support and supervision.

The strategies that will be discussed in subsequent pages have, for the most part, been tested in classroom conditions. Students have responded well to these activities. The underlying philosophy has been that the students are responsible for the success of class discussions and group conversation. When students become aware of their role as leaders in group activity, the classroom becomes an exciting adventure.

As with any other teaching technique or class activity, it is the teacher's responsibility to determine the appropriateness of the technique or activity to his or her students, e.g., age, level of maturity, linguistic proficiency, community standards, etc. The activities discussed in this publication provide suggestions for the teacher; they should be adapted or modified as appropriate for each class and for the teaching style of the instructor. Both teacher and students should feel comfortable and not threatened when engaged in any of these activities.

References cited in the text are included in a bibliography at the conclusion of the activities.

I. AUDIO-VISUAL STRATEGIES

1. Show and Tell

Tell each student to bring some object or momento to share with the class--a scrapbook, an art object, a trophy, etc. First have the students discuss their objects in groups of three or four. After ten to twenty minutes, have the students rotate to new groups. The final ten to fifteen minutes may either be spent in new groups or in a situation where the teacher directs the discussion. In the latter case, the teacher may (a) ask for volunteers to share their objects with the entire class, (b) invite those students whose objects seemed particularly fascinating as he observed the class, or (c) draw names of students from a paper bag to share their objects with the entire class.

2. Picture Stories

The student looks at a series of pictures and then makes up a story to include all or a few pictures. Variations: (a) Each team is given a picture or sequence of pictures and told to create a story. (b) Draw a series of cartoons to create a message; no words are permitted. Other cartoons can be taken from newspapers or comic books. (c) Using slides, show pictures of persons performing actions and have the students describe them. (d) Another source of picture sequences might be filmstrips or the Bull visual grammar charts.

3. Apperception Test

A psychological test called the Thematic Apperception Test consists of a series of drawings of things and people, usually in crisis situations. The student is shown one of these drawings and then asked to (a) describe objectively what he sees in the painting, and (b) interpret what is going on. (If the TAT drawings aren't available, select drawings or paintings from magazines or elsewhere that show people acting and reacting in situations of emotional crisis.) Students should work in groups.

4. Object Description

Ask each student to write down the first word that comes to mind as the class is shown a series of ten objects. Have the class compare their responses in groups, and discuss the reasons for their various responses. Objects could be an old shoe, a crutch, an overcoat, a gun, a pair of false eyelashes, a camera, etc. Variation: Place an object in front of the class (perhaps your watch, a pen, or briefcase). Have the class individually list as many attributes of the object as they can in 'X' minutes. (Uses, what it is made of, descriptive qualities, persons related to it, etc.) Then analyze in groups what each person has written. Which attributes seem most unpredictable, predictable?

5. House of Many Windows

Picture yourself as a house of many windows. What aspects of your personality would appear at each window? Remember that all windows in the house are not the same: some are family or living room windows; others are kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, garage, or cellar windows. Assign each student to bring a drawing of a house in which various aspects of their personality appear at the windows. If they are not good at drawing, they may use cutouts from magazines.

6. Self Portrait

Ask each student to paint a self-portrait to introduce him/herself to the class. The painting may be of any materials (collage, personal objects, etc.), and it may portray the student in any manner he/she chooses. During the next class period, have students introduce their paintings in groups of three to five. If desired, select people to present

their portrait to the class. Be supportive and encouraging. Do not question students about their portrait. Variation: Provide students with blank paper and crayons. Give them three minutes to draw something, and then have all members of the group do a psychological analysis of the painting and the person who drew it.

7. Surprise Box

A covered shoebox contains one or more unknown objects (a light bulb, a glove, a fishing reel, a wallet, etc). Students in each group must guess the identity of the object. The group leader answers questions with "yes" or "no." Variation: One team member feels the object, describes it partially, and then all try to guess what it is.

8. Young Lady/Old Lady

The class is divided into groups of three or four. They are told that they are on the selection board of a country club. A wealthy benefactor of the club has told them that he has a friend moving to town who doesn't know anyone, and he would greatly appreciate it if they would accept her membership on his recommendation. He has brought a picture of her, but he has not thought it necessary to bring additional information. The committee members thank him and tell him that they will let him know. (Show the picture to the group for about thirty seconds.) Group members are told to answer the following questions individually as best they can from what they have seen.

(a) How old is the person?
(b) What is her social class?
(c) How much education has she had?
(d) What is her occupation?
(e) From her appearance would you trust her?

9. Wheel of Fortune

Cut a cardboard circle approximately two feet in diameter. Around the outside, paste pictures that might suggest an activity or place--castle, woman screaming for help, Disneyland, the devil, a movie star, some savage animal, etc. Make an additional circle approximately one foot in diameter. Divide this circle into twelve pie slices. In each slice write some open-ended wish or story line: "I would like to travel to/with..." "I would like to marry..." "One day I dreamed that..." Fasten inner wheel on top of outer wheel so that it spins. Students then spin the wheel and make up a story corresponding to the picture that their particular sentence points to.

10. Personal Scrapbook

Each student is assigned to search old magazines and create a scrapbook story. He should cut out pictures to illustrate the story. Variations: (a) Class groups may be assigned to create a collective story. (b) Individuals or the group may be asked to look for illustrations/vocabulary/ news on a given subject area, such as fashions, politics, jokes, clothes advertisements, houses.

11. Ideal Self

Groups are assigned different tasks. One group is to go through magazines and cut out various, contrasting parts of the human body. Another is to cut out articles of clothing. Another might look for professions, places, or activities. Then one member from another group is invited to select and create his ideal self. Thus, one student might go to a group and select and create the kind of body he/she might like to have. Members of the host group should interrupt in the selection and ask why he/she selected certain body parts rather than others. Why, for example, does the person choose to be a blonde rather than a redhead?

12. Imaginary Animal

Have each person invent an imaginary animal by using pictures from magazines. After mounting, name the animal and answer such questions as (a) what do I eat, (b) where do I come from, (c) how did I get here, (d) what do I like?

13. Draw What You Hear

Have the students listen to the description of a well-known animal and sketch it as best they can. Then, in groups, they should compare what they have drawn. Variation: Draw houses, table settings, the human body, articles of clothing, etc.

14. Childrens' Stories Filmstrips

Show the filmstrip with the accompanying recording. Then show the filmstrip once more, but ask members of the class to narrate what is going on.

15. Taped Interviews

Record interviews in the foreign language with native speakers and prepare a transcription of the interview. Play the interview once, having the students listen to what is being said. Play it once more, but allow students to read along, if necessary, as the interview progresses. Next, hand out a sheet with two types of questions: interview comprehension questions and questions which lead to a discussion of the topic of the interview.

16. Paintings

Buy or have slide reproductions made of paintings of great artists. As the slides are shown, students write briefly their first impression of each painting and then discuss their impressions in groups. Later, the entire class may exchange impressions. Students should then talk, in groups, of their own artistic interests: (a) What would you like to paint someday? (b) What kind of painting interests you the most? For the next class period, students bring their own painting or collage, or a painting that they particularly enjoy, to share with members of the group or class.

17. Sounds

Prepare a cassette tape of various sounds--wind, rain, laughter, baseball game, train, trucks, river, ocean, etc. Have students identify the sounds and tell what activity is in process as they hear the sounds. They should also say whether a particular sound makes them feel good, bad, or evokes no emotional response.

18. Songs

Choose songs that have some 'discussion' content. The conversational component is as important as the singing. A conversational stimulus could be a questionnaire relating to music: (a) Who is your favorite male/female singer? (b) What type of music do you prefer? (c) What songs are your favorites?

19. Recipes

One student acts as the chef. All the ingredients are shown to the class, and they are given copies of the recipe. They can either be asked to help prepare the dish, or the 'chef' may play dumb and only do things told to him by the class. Other class members might be invited to bring favorite dishes and demonstrate their preparation. Also, a discussion about food, favorite recipes, desserts, or culinary skills can be structured for use in small groups.

20. Advertisements

Provide students with newspapers or magazines in the target language and have them look for advertisements on specific subjects. They should bring the ads to class

and discuss the vocabulary, grammatical constructions, and cultural content within groups.

21. Picture Game

Three students are sent out of the room. The instructor shows the class a picture. The class jots down, in five minutes, the important elements in the picture. (Students should not draw the picture.) Student A comes in and is told the class description of the picture. A may not ask questions, though he may ask the group to repeat the description once, and may not draw the picture or write anything. B is then called in and A repeats the process. C is then called in and, after hearing the description from B, should draw the picture on the board. As descriptions are being given, class members should record omissions. At the end, the original should be compared to the picture drawn by C and variances discussed.

22. Immediate Environment

Have each student take five minutes to look around and visually explore everything around him/her. Each should make a list of everything he/she sees. Students should then pair off and compare their lists. Are they the same? Why? Why not?

23. Treasure Box

Divide the class into groups of three. One group at a time observes the contents of a box on the instructor's desk, noting mentally all the items and their colors. Groups return to their seats and list everything they saw in the box. Then they compare with what other groups saw, asking such questions as (a) Did you omit or add details as you compiled individual and group list? (b) What inferences did you and your group make about the objects you listed as being in the box? (c) What objects did you remember easily? (d) Did size, color, or shape have anything to do with your perception of objects? Why? Why not?

II. COMMUNICATION GAMES

24. Split Second

Divide the class into groups of four to six. One person serves as moderator and judge. The moderator asks a question from a prepared list and the 'contestants' raise their hands if they know the answer. The moderator notes who raises his/her hand first, second, etc. If the first person cannot answer correctly within fifteen seconds, the second person may try. Each correct answer is worth five points. Questions may be on any topic, from grammatical forms and vocabulary items to questions of historical, social, or public interest. After a period of time, the leading players should be sent to other groups. Typical questions might be:

(a) When did Columbus discover the Americas?
(b) A person who isn't married is a____.
(c) A person who doesn't tell the truth is a____.
(d) What are the four seasons of the year?
(e) Name five colors.
(f) Give the conjugation in the preterite of venir and decir.
(g) Name the twelve months of the year.

25. Tic-Tac-Toe

This game works with any subject matter, from questions on readings and vocabulary to grammatical forms and concepts. Two ways of playing it are popular: (a) Questions are written on individual slips of paper and put into an envelope. A student draws a question slip from the envelope and answers it. If he is correct, he may place

his 'O' or 'X' wherever he desires. Then a person from the other team takes a turn. (b) Fasten envelopes to the tic-tac-toe board with a question in each envelope. Thus, the instructor may place harder questions in envelopes on more popular spaces. I normally try to have as many six to ten tic-tac-toe boards operating at once in the classroom. After a period of time, I change the groups, placing the winners of one group with the winners of another.

26. Baseball

The subject matter may be drawn from any material--readings, vocabulary, and grammar forms. Questions are placed in envelopes marked 'Single' (easiest), 'Double,' 'Triple,' and 'Home Run.' The team at bat selects a question from any of the envelopes. The batter (one team member) attempts to answer. If he is successful, he advances his man to whatever base earned. A question answered incorrectly is an out. The teacher may decide whether one, two, or three outs are needed to retire the side. (I prefer one out, since it makes the game move more quickly.) Teams may consist of one, two, three, or four players.

27. Twenty Questions

The instructor places thirty to forty pieces of paper into an envelope. On each piece of paper is written a famous place, a person, a profession, or a thing. One student reaches in and draws a slip of paper, and the other students ask questions. Questions may only be answered with 'Yes' or 'No.' The person answering the questions keeps track of the number of questions asked. If the item is not guessed in twenty questions, the person who drew the slip wins. Then the envelope is passed to the next player.

28. What's My Line?

Person X draws a profession from an envelope. A panel of two to four class members tries to discover X's profession. Panel member A begins the questions and continues until he receives a 'no' answer. B continues the questioning. Game ends when the profession is discovered, time runs out, or twenty 'no' answers are given. Variation: A profession is taped to each person's back, and he has to go around the room asking questions until he discovers his profession. (All members of the class should be circulating at the same time.)

29. Who Am I?

Instead of professions, the subject is famous persons, living or dead, real or fictitious. Typical could be: Jane Fonda, Tarzan, Napoleon, Jesus, Hitler, Don Quixote, Joan Baez, etc. Variations: What am I? or Where am I?

30. Password

Vocabulary should be taken from materials the students have studied (dialogues, readings) and should be played in groups of four. A and B are partners, C and D are partners. The four players sit as diagrammed below:

A------C A and C are given a word list which they share.
. . B and D are also given a list.
. .
B------D

(An alternative is to have a paper bag containing word slips for each group.) The game begins when A and C look at the first word on the list or draw a word from the bag. A gives a one-word clue to B. If B fails, C gives a clue to D. Clues and guessing continue until the word is guessed or both teams give up. Variation: Instead of one-word answers, team members might be allowed to give sentence clues. For example, if the

word is 'blue,' the team member might say: "This is the color of the sky on a sunny day."

31. Categories

A student and his/her partner select a category: colors, clothing, house, professions, actors, actresses, months, food, human body, school, geography, kitchen sports, etc. One student provides the clues while the other answers. If they get stuck, they may pass to the next word. They are racing against the clock which the other team keeps; time limit is one minute. Teams earn one point for each item guessed. The instructor prepares fifteen to twenty items for use in each category and write the items on separate slips of paper. Variation: Instead of the instructor writing slips, students pick a category and write as many words as they can which relate to that category. Each correct word earns one point. The time limit is one minute.

32. Rhythm

Students are seated in a line or circle. Groups should consist of five to eight persons. Number one (the leader) thinks of a category (or selects one from a bag) and begins the rhythm by hitting the tops of his legs twice and then while snapping fingers saying (pat) (pat) "Names" (snap) (pat) (pat) "of" (snap) (pat) (pat) "colors" (snap) (pat) (pat) "red" (snap) (pat) (pat)--number two must say another color, and so on down the line. Should a member be unable to think of a color not already stated or break the rhythm, he/she must go to the end of the line. After about five categories, the leader should retire to the end of the line, and the number two player becomes the leader.

33. Concentration

Groups of two to four are seated around a checkerboard which has each square covered by a numbered disc or card. A word is written in each square. Somewhere else on the board the same word is written. Each student must pick where the two identical words are. If he is successful, he gets a chance to try a second board, on which is written some famous saying or proverb in the target language. Each time he is successful at the first matching exercise on the Concentration board, he has the opportunity to remove one of the squares covering some part of the famous saying. The winners are those who first correctly guess the famous saying and who uncover the greatest number of identical words. Variation: Instead of identical words, the pair words might be antonyms, synonyms, or other related words.

34. Picture-Word

The game is played in teams of two. As many as ten teams may participate. Each team should have a supply of scrap paper. The instructor or leader writes a word on a piece of paper. He shows the word to one member of each of the teams at the same time. This team member runs back to his seat and draws a picture of the word. If the word were 'beer,' he might draw a picture of a bottle or a beer mug, but may not write the name of any product. The other team member attempts to guess the word as it is being drawn. The first to do so wins a point for the team. After a certain number of words, it is a good idea to change teams.

35. Envelope Draw

Each group of three to five is provided with an envelope which contains several slips of paper. On each slip of paper is written a set of instructions in English. One slip might say: "Name five professions and tell which profession you would enjoy the most." The student who draws this slip must (a) translate the instructions, and (b) perform whatever is required. A completely correct answer is worth ten points. One or two mistakes earns five points. After several draws, the winning players should

form new groups and the others move to other areas.

36. Riddles

The instructor prepares a series of simple riddles. ("I am a word. I am black, and I have wings. What am I?") Students may ask additional questions and, hopefully, in a short time they will figure out that the answer is a 'crow.' The riddles can focus on animals, articles of clothing, members of the family, etc. After the instructor has presented several, he should allow the students to create their own riddles individually or in groups.

37. Head-Tail

Students are placed in groups and numbered 1, 2, 3, etc. A question is asked of number one. If he answers correctly, he stays at the head; if not, he goes to the tail. The next question is asked to number two and so on. Either the instructor, a student aide, or a group leader asks the questions. Other members of the group may also try to stump the leader. If so, they take the leader's place.

38. College Bowl

Groups are arranged by teams, (two or three to a team). A moderator poses the questions and keeps score. Questions are by category, and within each category there are five-, ten-, and twenty-five point questions. Categories can be any subject—history, politics, religion, geography, current affairs. A question unanswered by one team results in a loss of points equal to the value of the question.

39. Charades

Groups should be pitted against each other, and there should be an even number of groups. The instructor selects categories within the vocabulary range of the class. Each group should then write items from the categories designated on separate pieces of paper. Groups take turns acting out the items given to them by the opposing groups. The object is to guess whatever is written on the slip of paper in the least amount of time.

40. Faces

Prepare a set of six numbered cards. On the reverse side of these cards, in jumbled order, are pieces of the picture of a famous person. The group leader acts as moderator. He calls on a student and reads a question orally. If the student gives a correct response, ask him which card he would like to have turned over. After the card is turned over, the student has the chance to identify the person. If the student answers correctly, the game is over. The game continues until the identity has been guessed or until all the cards have been turned over.

41. Hollywood Squares

Seat nine students in the form of a tic-tac-toe board; then draw a tic-tac-toe diagram on the chalkboard. Select two students to come to the front of the room and sit facing the class. Name one student 'X' and the other 'O.' X picks a square, and the teacher asks the student occupying that square a question. The student gives an answer, and X has to say whether it was a correct or incorrect response. If X is right, he gets the square he chose.

42. Antics with Semantics

This idea was inspired by Bertrand Russell's 'verb conjugations,' e.g., "I am firm. You are obstinate. He is pigheaded." Russell, of course, was attempting to show that we use nonoffensive, complimentary words to describe ourselves, less offensive words to describe the person we are talking to, and reserve our most condemning adjectives,

adverbs, etc. to describe others.

Divide the class into groups of three to five. Each group has a leader and a recorder. The leader reads the "I" statements, and the group creates the "You" and "He" conjugations. The recorder writes down the "You" and "He" statements the group creates. When all the groups have finished the exercise, each recorder reads his group's conjugations to the entire class. Some possible "I" statements are:

(a) I don't dance very well.
(b) I am optimistic.
(c) I like to drive at a good clip.
(d) I usually go along with the opinions of the group.
(e) I dress casually.
(f) I have a lively imagination.
(g) I occasionally lose my temper.
(h) I had my fling as a kid.
(i) I am a person of few words.
(j) I am a trifle overweight.

(For additional statements, see Krupar, pp. 26-27.)

Within each group, students can also discuss the following questions about their experiences with this exercise: (a) Have you ever found yourself constructing "You" or "He" statements? When? Why? (b) Are there certain people who 'conjugate irregular verbs' frequently when they talk? Why do you think they do this? (c) With what types of people or in what instances are you more likely to engage in this practice?

43. Word Guess

A student draws a word from an envelope and must describe it so that the person listening will either guess the word or draw what you are describing. Example: vestido. "Es de tela y es una prenda de vestir de la mujer que ella pone sobre su cuerpo para esconder su desnudez. Tiene mangas, y cubre el cuerpo del cuello hasta las rodillas o a veces hasta los tobillos." Other things to describe might be: house, room, picture, boy, girl, dog, rabbit, star, hammer, typewriter, bicycle, etc.

III. INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

44. Getting Acquainted

Form groups of three students. Participants in each group name themselves A, B, and C. A takes three minutes to tell B and C as much about himself as he feels comfortable doing. B and C then repeat the process. Together, A and B take two minutes to tell participant C what they heard him say, and what they inferred from what he said or left unsaid. B and C repeat this process for A, and A and C repeat the process for B. The instructor can also draw a name of some class member from a bag and have the other two members of his group tell as much about him as they can.

45. Another Culture

Assign students, alone or in pairs, to seek a person who speaks the target language and engage that person in a conversation. They should bring a report of their findings and activity to class.

46. Common Ground

Enumerate five or six discussion topics (other than childhood memories) which may enable strangers to discover some degree of common ground, e.g., religion, political affiliation/views, attitude toward marriage/children, profession, etc. Students are then told: "You are introduced to a stranger and you want to find some 'common

ground' with this individual. List the areas in which you and the other person have common interests. Be specific."

47. Third-Party Interview

Form groups of three or more. The group is to answer questions about an individual not seated with the group. Have the group discuss the questions and try to conjecture how the person would answer. After five minutes or so, invite the person to the group and see how he/she responds to the same questions. Compare responses. Sample questions:

(a) What's the person's name?
(b) What political party does he/she support?
(c) Is she/he a member of a fraternity/sorority?
(d) What's his/her major?
(e) What year is he/she in the university?
(f) What kind of record album do you think this person would buy?
(g) List three adjectives that describe the way the person feels now.
(h) List three adjectives that describe his/her personality.
(i) What are his/her favorite amusements?

48. Stranger in Midst

A stranger comes into the class, makes an announcement or discusses something of general interest, and then leaves. The class is then asked to write down the three things they remember best about the individual--those things that characterize him best. While the class turns to other business, one person tabulates the data. First, the most common characteristics are noted; then extremes are reported. For example, some will remember clothes, others physical mannerisms, and still others attitudinal or behavioral characteristics.

49. Daily Customs Survey

Prepare a questionnaire to be answered by members of the class. Questions could refer to anything from religion to dating, personal possessions, recreation, amount of time spent studying. While the class turns to other matters, have someone tabulate the responses. At an appropriate time, the results should be announced, analyzed, and discussed.

50. Cromos Questionnaires

The Colombian magazine Cromos regularly publishes attitudinal questionnaires. The questions deal with a person's fears, hopes, desires, ambitions. Several of these can be modified and used with groups in a classroom situation.

51. Informant Interviews

Invite Spanish-speaking individuals from the community or school who have had extensive experience in other countries to come to the class. As prior preparation, assign students to bring twenty questions which they might like to ask the person. (During the interview, if all don't participate, the instructor should invite reluctant members of the class to ask some of their questions.)

52. Community Involvement

Instead of bringing informants to the classroom, students are asked to locate a native speaker of the language. They then conduct an interview with the individual and report their findings to the class. If desired, a tape recording can be made of the interview.

53. Family History

Assign students to answer a series of questions relating to their ancestors. They then bring the answers, together with any suitable photos, to the class for discussion in groups. Such questions as the following could be asked.

(a) Where was your grandfather (grandmother) born?
(b) When did your ancestors first come to this country?
(c) Which of your ancestors do you remember the best?
(d) Are there any famous people among your ancestors?
(e) Do you have any 'skeletons' in your family closet?
(f) Is there anything you regret about your family history?
(g) Write down the names of your family members and jot down a few observations about each individual's personality and contributions to the family. How willing is each to share responsibility for decisions and goals? How giving/taking, cooperative/uncooperative is each? How do you feel about each member of your family? Which do you like most? Why? Least? Why?

54. 'My Questions' Interview

Before class, each student prepares a list of ten questions which an interviewer should ask him or her in order to know the 'real' person. In class, students are paired and exchange their lists of questions. As they interview each other, they write down the answers given. When the interview is complete, three pairs join to form groups of six. Students introduce their partner to the rest of the group, using the information gathered in the interview. Students may correct or modify the impressions created by their interviewer as they are introduced to the group.

IV. VALUES CLARIFICATION

A rich area for conversation focuses on the personal beliefs and attitudes of each student. Normally, a person desires to talk about his/her own accomplishments, hopes, fears, etc. more than anything else. When the language teacher selects activities which tap the vast reservoir of personal emotions and experiences, he is able to promote exciting exchanges of thought in the classroom. Raths suggests ten value areas the teacher might want to focus on: money, friends, love, religion, leisure, politics, work, family, maturity, and character traits. He also indicates that, within each of these areas, some indicators of value are: attitudes, aspirations, goals, interests, activities, feelings, beliefs, and worries.

55. My Prejudices

Make a list of things, ideas, and people about which you have a strong feeling or prejudice. Can you identify when you acquired this feeling? Why do you have this prejudice? What is it about each that you dislike? Variation: Cite an example of an attitude you held for a long time which you subsequently changed.

56. Flights of Fantasy

Sometimes, fantasy helps students to focus on the basic values in their lives. Value-oriented fantasy questions might include:

(a) If you had to live in another country, where would you live?
(b) If you were shipwrecked on an island, what five things would you most like to have?
(c) If you could marry anyone in the world, who would it be?
(d) Would you have ordered the atomic bomb dropped in 1945 if you were Truman?
(e) If you could spend the day with one famous person, which one would you select?

What would you do?

Otto's Fantasy Encounter Games contains more than sixty 'games,' many of which focus on personal values. One that might work well in class is "Fantasy Dice." Students roll a single die and for 1 must tell a fantasy of success, for 2 a fantasy of escape, for 3 a fantasy of beauty, for 4 a fantasy of fear, for 5 a fantasy of love, and for 6 a fantasy of death. Another fantasy game is "Do Your Own Thing," which presupposes you have just inherited all the money you would ever need. The student must choose where to live/travel, changes in home or means of transportation, mode of dress, friends, amusements, etc. Students can be grouped, and each group might have a different fantasy game. The games might be rotated, or the leaders assigned to different groups.

57. The Value Sheet

Raths (pp. 84-111) explains the value sheet. Basically, it consists of a provocative statement or quote, followed by a series of questions. Students take the value sheet home, read the quote carefully, and answer the questions. Discussion in class occurs in groups, as the students compare their answers. Raths suggests that the instructor not allow arguments to occur, but that the group participants be nonjudgmental as they listen to the opinions of others. Here is an example of a value-sheet quote:

> I used to be an idealist. When there was a picket line, I would picket. When there was a sitdown, I would sit. When there was a demonstration, I would demonstrate. I sat for two days in front of a store that wouldn't hire 'minority'-type people; I felt that they should have a fair chance in the land of opportunity, that all men are created equal. They told me to go to Russia; I was born in Brooklyn! Once I was arrested for going into a school with a sign saying that all children are entitled to an equal opportunity to education, like the Supreme Court says the Constitution means. They called me a Communist! Soon I got tired of being called all these names, so I gave up. I don't care if half of them starve; I don't care if they don't all get educated; I don't care if they kill each other with bombs; I don't care if their babies die from radiation. Now I'm a good American.

58. Values Clarification Stimuli

Raths suggests other strategies that get students to consider their values. Among these are:

(a) The value-clarifying discussion. Teacher or leader must be nonjudgmental and accepting. There are no conclusions to draw, no consensus to identify, no test items to take. The teacher ends the discussion by having someone summarize what has gone on. (Cut off discussions at the first sign of dullness.)

(b) Quotations. Write or read a provocative quotation to the class: "Noting great is done without fanaticism." Teacher might suggest some avenues for discussion of the quote. Teacher must remember not to 'put down' those who disagree with him.

(c) Picture without a caption. Teacher brings in a picture which involves a story of some kind. Students are asked to supply a caption describing what is going on. (Picture might be a political cartoon, photograph of a street fight or picketing.)

(d) Editorials, letters to the editor, election literature, tape recordings of news broadcasts can also be used.

59. Word Association

As a list of words is read, write your immediate response to each word in a word, phrase, or sentence. Then get in groups and compare responses and reasons for responding the way you did. Which responses seemed the most predictable? unpredictable? A possible word list is: rights, pot, 'heavy,' revolutionary, black, stereotype,

criticism, teacher, strike, love, snake, hippie, establishment, rock, music, hardhat, draft, acceptance, cool, morals, hope, war, abortion, sex, God, home, education, liberty, hot, beautiful, racism, straight, equality. Variation: Each student takes home a list of words and writes a definition for each word, giving an example which illustrates how the word is used. For this exercise, do not look to the dictionary; look to yourself. Think about these words and write the reactions, feelings, impressions, and specific events or instances which each of these terms brings to mind. You may also want to ask family or friends their definitions of these words. Later, in groups within the class, discuss similarities and differences in word perceptions.

60. Thought Sheet

Sit quietly with your eyes closed for a few minutes. What sensations were you aware of? What sounds could you identify? Could you feel the object you were sitting on? Did you smell any particular odor? What did you think about? Variation: Each week a student turns in a 3" x 5" card on which he has written some thought of importance to him which indicates something of the quality of living or thinking in the preceding week. From time to time excerpts from the thought cards are read anonymously. When thoughts are read, the classroom usually comes to a hush. Students like to hear the thoughts--honest thoughts--of fellow students. Comments following the reading are usually lively and direct. One listens to and experiences contact with students who may be doing exciting and important things; they hear of alternatives or consequences in life they had never considered (Raths, pp. 131-33).

61. Voting

The teacher poses a list of questions, and students state a position by a show of hands. The teacher may conclude such a voting session with something as innocuous as "thank you" and go on to a subject-matter lesson without fear that the time was wasted. Performed sensitively and paced evenly, some students will understand for the first time how many of their peers have no fathers, feel lonely, like to watch television, or discuss religious matters (Raths, pp. 152-54). Variation: Ask three students to prepare a voting list. At times, the teacher might ask if anyone wants to comment on any of the voting questions or would like to write a few thoughts on any of the questions.

62. Deep, Dark Secret

With the understanding that participation is entirely optional and voluntary, have each student who wishes to participate take home a "3 x 5" card and type on it the secret which he would least like his peers to know about him. (If the instructor desires, he may tell the class to write a real or fictional secret.) At the next class meeting, the cards are collected, carefully shuffled by the instructor, and then read aloud. The class can attempt to categorize the cards on the blackboard under (a) Personal Inadequacy, (b) Alienation, (c) Sex. Variation: When the students return with the cards, seat them in groups of six to eight. Each group places its cards in a bag. Each student takes out a card and tries to express how he/she would feel if that were his/her secret. (If anyone draws out his/her own card, the card is put back in the bag and another drawn. No one may comment on his/her own secret.) Later, the group can discuss the effect of such secrets upon communication. (a) Do any of the individual secrets surprise you? (b) How many, do you think, were real rather than fictional secrets?

63. Incomplete or Open-ended Statements

The instructor either reads aloud a series of incomplete statements or provides the student with a dittoed copy of them. Students individually complete each statement,

and then discuss responses in groups. The group should be careful to think about each person's responses. As each person gives his response to a particular item, he might be required to repeat the responses of the other members of the group. Sample open-ended statements include:

(a) I am a_____.
(b) I am happy when I_____.
(c) Ten years from now, I want to_____.
(d) This school is_____.
(e) Next Saturday night I want to_____.
(f) My three heroes are_____, _____, and _____.
(g) I believe_____, but my dad believes_____.
(h) Once in a dream, I_____.
(i) If I only had 24 hours to live, I_____.
(j) With a new car, I could_____.
(k) In Spain I_____.
(l) What I'm looking for in life is_____.
(m) I'm against_____.
(n) I'm proud to say that I_____.
(o) To better my life, I want_____.
(p) On Saturdays I like to_____.
(q) I feel good when_____.
(r) I'm disappointed when_____.
(s) Something easy for me is_____.
(t) I love a house that_____.
(u) For me, the sun represents_____.
(v) What I fear most is_____.
(w) The person who_____is my best friend.

64. Value Continuum

To the student: You will mark your position regarding each set of values somewhere along the value continuum line. That mark represents how you stand on the particular issue. After completing the questionnaire, choose a partner or two and discuss how you marked the continuum sheet. Sample value continuum items might be:

I know who I am _____ I don't know myself
I am happy by nature _____ I am sad by nature
I favor abortion _____ I oppose abortion
I believe in God _____ I have no belief in God
I favor premarital sex _____ I oppose premarital sex
I like rock music _____ I hate rock music
My parents are great _____ My parents are lousy
I want to marry _____ I don't want to marry

65. Rank Order or Preference Grouping

This activity is useful in decision-making and also is an effective means of introducing new vocabulary and internalizing a grammatical structure. Student's indicate their preferences by writing 1, 2, 3 by each set of options.

Example: Do you prefer to be a clerk in ___a drugstore?
___a bookstore?
___a shoestore?

I prefer movies that are ___G rated.
___PG rated.
___R rated.

Someday I would like to live in ____France.
____Colombia.
____Sweden.

Variation: Have each person rank-order a set of things you have selected--objects, places to visit, people that might prove interesting to spend a day with, jobs they might like to have. In groups, have them compare and discuss differences in rankings.

66. Provocative Statement

Students are to write their feelings as they listen to a series of provocative statements. Such statements might be: "Jerry Brown isn't to be trusted." "When a woman has an abortion, she is killing a person." "Blondes have more fun." "President Nixon wasn't any worse than LBJ--he just got caught." Have the students compare their responses in groups.

67. Self-Perception Test

In California, a one-hundred item test that is given to detect how individuals perceive themselves has been translated into Spanish. Students are asked to complete the test individually. In class, the instructor leads a discussion concerning the meaning of the varying responses.

68. Who Are You?

Five chairs are arranged at the front of the room. Five volunteers are sent from the room, and observers are appointed to write down what the volunteers say in response to the question "Who are you?" The leader calls the volunteers into the room one at a time and asks them to be seated in one of the five chairs. He asks, "Who are you?", waits for a reply, and then repeats the question. The procedure continues until the leader has asked the question ten times and has received ten replies. (The leader should make no comments during this period.) The next volunteer is then called in, and the process is repeated. The observers then write on the board the names of the volunteers and their replies. Discussion might center on: What are the important groups to each person? How does the individual tell who he/she is by using reference to groups? Which one of the individuals do you know best from his/her replies?

69. Many Selfs

Have each student write a dialogue between two of his 'selfs.' Various roles (sets of opposite selfs) and topics may be used. Each student should hand in two copies of the dialogue without his/her name on the copies. Two students in class can then read the dialogue aloud. Variation: List the organizations to which you belong. Answer the following questions: What types of people belong to each organization? How would you describe your role in each organization? Which self speaks when you are with people of each organization? What are your reasons for belonging to some or most of these organizations? Take a controversial topic, and show how your many selfs would speak on the issue when talking with people from the organizations to which you belong.

70. I-Public Figure

Have each member of the class identify a public figure whom he perceives as resembling himself. Let groups discuss or identify the traits held in common by the student and the public figure. The student should then identify the characteristics he/she had in mind when he/she selected the public figure. Variation: Select five to

ten students, and have the rest of the class pick a public figure whom they associate with each student. The student should also select a public figure with whom he/she identifies. Class and student should explain why they chose that particular figure.

71. Major Decisions

List three decisions you have made which you feel have been extremely important in your life. What considerations went into making those decisions? Who influenced you in your final decision? Analyze the assumptions that went into making the decision. Variation: With a classmate, exchange a personal problem. Tell each other the following things about your problem: (a) goal, (b) obstructions to the goal, and (c) when and how you became aware of this problem. Let your partner prescribe a course of action. You listen to his/her problem and do the same for him/her.

72. Generation Gap

List six beliefs held by your parents, and indicate after each whether you also hold that belief. (Group discussion may focus on how beliefs change.) Variation: Pick a group with whose views you don't agree. List six beliefs of that group, and indicate which you oppose. Hopefully, the instructor can find someone in the class who belongs to that organization or who espouses the ideas of that particular group. Both individuals should talk over points of disagreement.

73. Student Journal

Each student keeps a journal of class experiences, writing comments after each class. The journal should contain: (a) comments or feelings about one's own communication efforts, difficulties, and needs, (b) an evaluation of the effectiveness of class activities, (c) comments on relationships with other students and the professor, (d) experiences that occur outside the classroom. Variation: Choose a partner. Each day for a week, note what your partner wears and says. Write down what 'messages' you received about your partner's moods, likes, feelings, values. Your partner will do the same for you. At the end of the week, exchange notes and discuss why you each got the messages you did.

74. Stereotypes

Individually, write what qualities or traits you associate with the following people or professions. Then compare your comments in groups. To what extent do these words constitute stereotypes for you?

Texan	farmer	swinger	urban dweller	WASP
prostitute	teenager	atheist	Democrat	Arab
Frenchman	teenie-bopper	artist	bouncer	
black	hippie	Republican	Indian	
Catholic	teacher	convict	Jew	

75. Current Courtship

Students are given an article that discusses courtship practices in the country of the target language. The article should be read for content and vocabulary. In addition, a questionnaire is included with the article, which should be filled out anonymously and turned in at the beginning of the period. A recorder is appointed to tabulate the questionnaires while the class is discussing, in groups or as a whole, the content of the article. Later, the results of the questionnaire are read and compared to attitudes reflected in the article. Sample questions: What is your principal reason for wanting to get married? Do you prefer a church or civil marriage? What is the best age to get married? Do you believe in family planning? What is the ideal number of children? What is the most important quality you would look for in a spouse? Do

you believe in premarital sex? Are you in favor of divorce? Do you want to marry a virgin? Would you marry someone who wasn't a virgin? Should a girl have a chaperone when going on a date? Variation: The same structure could be used for almost any topic where personal values and attitudes might be reflected--divorce, women's lib, death penalty, politics, religion.

76. Public Opinion

The class is divided into groups of four to five individuals. Each group discusses a topic, such as movies, drinking, voting, or school, and formulates a statement of its general belief:

(a) We believe that_____.
(b) We think that_____.
(c) It seems to us that_____.
(d) Our opinion is that_____.

After four or five minutes, the groups come back to the class as a whole, and individuals are questioned about what the groups have decided.

77. Personal Questionnaire

Previous to class, students are given a sheet of paper with five to ten personal questions. They bring the completed sheet to class and discuss in groups their responses to the questions. Later, if desired, the groups are rotated, bringing new people together to discuss the same questions. It is important not to assign too many questions at one time. As few as five questions can provide sufficient discussion material for an hour's activities, rotating the groups twice. Sample questions: What do you do in your free time? What is your major? Why did you choose that particular major? What countries would you like to visit? What places have you visited? What place is your favorite? Do you believe in God? Why do you or don't you go to church? Are you a Republican? A Democrat? What is your honest opinion of Nixon? Ford? Carter? What things do you like about school life? Talk about a job you've had. What is your favorite possession? What aspect of your personality do you like the most? What aspect do you like least? What things irritate you? What would be an ideal summer for you? What things about this class don't you like? If you were to identify the one value that holds the greatest importance in your life, what would it be? Can you explain why it is so important to you? Write a paragraph describing your personality as you see it. Variation: Put the questions in one envelope and the names of the students in another. Then draw a name and a question; the person chosen has to respond to the question.

78. Admirable Person

Tell about the most impressive person you've ever met. What made him so impressive? If you could spend one day with some famous person, doing whatever you desired, whom would you choose? What would you do?

79. Magic Circle

Form into groups. A leader presents a task and guides the reflection of feelings. Sample task: Look around the room. What do you see that you like? (Don't call on people; allow for voluntary responses.) After all have answered, have a 'recall' period in which someone tells what each one has said, speaking directly to the person.

V. ROLE-PLAYING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING

80. Dear Abby

Provide each student with copies of letters to 'Dear Abby,' and assign students to read the letters. In addition, assign students to take the role of the person who wrote the letter. Divide the class into a group for each letter. Have the role-playing student for that letter assigned to that group. The role-playing student explains his problem to the group, who collectively act as Abby. The group may ask additional questions, and then they give their 'advice' regarding his problem. After about fifteen minutes, the role-playing students rotate to a new group and begin the process again.

81. Situations

"Worthy of a special category is role-playing or dramatic improvisation. Students seem to welcome the chance to take on a new identity in a temporary situation" (Raths, p. 121). The teacher should set the situation and assign roles or ask for volunteers. It is useful to work in groups, rather than forcing students to role-play before the entire class. Sample role-playing situations can be:

(a) Student X is a stewardess; student Y tries to make a date with her.
(b) Student X is a stewardess; student Y tells her he is going to hijack the plane.
(c) Student X is a housewife; student Y, her wife-beating husband; student Z, a family counselor.
(d) Student X is a lazy wife; student Y is her husband.
(e) Student X is an unfaithful husband; Y is his wife.
(f) Student X has just broken off with his girl friend. Y is his best friend; Z, roommate; S, parents; T, professor. X has to explain to each (Y,Z,S,T) the particulars about the breakup.
(g) X and Y decide when to get married.
(h) X, a Mexican visitor, and Y, a native of Fresno, discuss where to live, what to do, etc.
(i) X, a lazy student, and Y, a professor, discuss the student's poor work.
(j) X, a female driver, and Y, a male driver, discuss a crash that just occurred (can include witnesses).
(k) X, a daughter, wants to move to an apartment and tries to convince her parents, Y and Z.
(l) X, the father, and Y, the future son-in-law, discuss Y's marriage to X's daughter.
(m) You are Snoopy, the dog. You are your own boss. You can do anything you want. You decide to_____.

82. Stereotypes

Select several students and assign each of them a specific role (minister, call girl, policeman, teacher). Choose a social issue and have each person speak according to the way the stereotype might. (Instructor might have the class identify the roles to be played.) Variation 1: Tape a stereotype on the back of each individual. Students have to go around asking questions until they discover the stereotype they represent. Variation 2: Have students draw a stereotype from a bag and circulate in the room talking like their stereotype until the stereotype is identified. Variation 3: Preassign stereotypes. Students come to class dressed and acting like their stereotypes. A discussion on a social issue is conducted in which each stereotype speaks according to his/her mold.

83. Celebrity Interview

Assign a person to be a guest celebrity. Members of the class should come to class with questions to ask the guest. If desired, four celebrities can be assigned, and discussion is carried on in four groups, with rotation occurring every fifteen minutes.

84. Do As You Are Told

Much human communication consists in giving or following orders or directions. This exercise is especially good for drilling command forms. Break into small groups. Assign one 'order-taker' to leave the room. As a group, develop instructions for performing a common task--how to sit down, how to put on a coat, how to eat a banana, how to kiss a girl. Call the 'order-taker' in and, using group-prepared instructions, tell him how to perform the task. Variation 1: Have students sit back-to-back in pairs. One acts as the instruction-giver, the other as the instruction-taker. The activity can be about anything--how to draw a picture, how to comb one's hair, how to eat, etc. The instruction-taker may not ask questions. Variation 2: Choose a partner and ask him to lead you around blindfolded. Your partner will give you directions and ask you to do certain things. After a few minutes, switch roles.

85. Contrived Incident

As class begins, have someone rush in and create a scene. After the scene, have the class members write down what just took place--description of the individual, nature of the problem, their impressions. Then have groups compare the differences in what they wrote.

86. Fantasy Games

Otto's book has more than one hundred role-playing situations in which the students' fantasy is allowed to soar. The "Cosmic Visitors Fantasy," for example, calls for one person to act as if he were a space visitor. He interviews earth beings in order to obtain an accurate knowledge of what life on earth is like.

87. Job Interview

Select a classmate as a partner and work out two hypothetical job interviews together. Alternate between the positions of interviewer and interviewee. As interviewee, simply respond impromptu to the statements put to you by the interviewer. In the other instance, before participating in the interview, plan the questions that you will ask carefully. Variation: You are interviewing for a job as valet, secretary, chauffeur, cook, escort, etc. for some famous person--Marlon Brando, Henry Kissinger, Andrew Young, Julie Andrews). One person should make up the questions, the other answer them.

88. Spokesman for a Mute

Work in groups of three to five. The idea is for an 'interviewer' to find out the views of a mute on a particular social issue. The mute stands behind his/her spokesman and either rewards or punishes his spokesman for what he says as reflecting the mute person's true feelings. The reward can be a pat, stroke, or soft squeeze. The punishment can be a sharp poke, hard squeeze, or pinch. The spokesman cannot look at the mute for clues as to how he should answer. After a certain period of time, roles should be exchanged.

89. Current Events

Select a member of the class to interview for the purpose of gathering information about some event that recently occurred on campus, in the community, or in the nation. Either record or write down his responses. This can be combined with role-

playing, e.g., President Ford discussing the Middle East situation with Kissinger, a reporter talking to the school principal or college president.

90. Devil's Advocate

When having group discussion of a social issue, secretly assign one student to be the devil's advocate. If the entire group seems to be condemning Nixon, this person praises Nixon's virtues. This usually arouses lively discussion. Variation: Assign a person to give a talk on some controversial issue, but have the person defend the most absurd point of view. Thus, if women's lib is the subject, the speech might reiterate the evils of such a movement.

91. Reflective Listening

As a group, engage in any problem-solving situation. Each person can speak only after he has restated the ideas and feelings of the previous speaker accurately and to that person's satisfaction. Sample topics: Are student activists justified in taking over campus buildings? Are premarital sexual relations acceptable? Should grades be eliminated?

92. Perception and Discernment

Distribute or read a description of an individual. Students select those traits which are most in accord with the picture the individual students have formed in their minds, e.g., (1) Generous-ungenerous, (b) Shrewd-gullible, (c) Irritable-good-natured, (d) Strong-weak, (e) Self-centered-altruistic, (f) Reliable-unreliable, (g) Open-closed.

93. Lonely Hearts

Prior to class, students are given copies of letters to 'Lonely Hearts' columns in the target language and are to study the characteristics of the letters and vocabulary used. Following discussion in class, students compose such a letter in which they describe themselves and comment on their interests, hobbies, and the qualities they are looking for in a mate. As the teacher reads the letters, the class tries to guess the identity of the writer.

VI. POT POURRI

In this section are other useful conversational activities that don't fit into the previous areas. They range from formal, well-prepared talks on a preassigned topic to 'do-it-yourself' projects. The primary goal is to create a situation where students will converse with each other.

94. Add Along

Three or four people sit in a group. The first person begins a story with a sentence. The next person repeats what the first person has said and then adds a sentence of his/her own. Variation: Each group is given an envelope containing slips of paper which serve as the beginning for the add-along activity. Examples:

(a) "One day I decided to take a walk. First I went to the park, then..."

(b) "I needed some clothes for school, so I went to the store and bought a blouse, then..."

(c) "This morning when I got up, I washed my face. Then I..."

The person adding on must repeat all that has been said before. After the sentence has been around the group two or three times, go on to another topic. This activity also works well with fantasy, for example: "Once I decided to run away, so I..."

95. Brainstorming

In a small-group setting, choose a problem for consideration by the group and then brainstorm for possible courses of action or solutions to the problem. Bear in mind the following guidelines: (a) Present as many possibilities as you can. (b) Do not expand or develop any suggestion that is made, note it and move on. (c) Do not criticize any idea which is suggested or any person suggesting an idea. See how many possible solutions the group can list in ten minutes. The instructor may have someone in each group record ideas. Later, ideas can be shared with other groups.

96. Personal Experiences

Early in the year, have students complete a questionnaire which asks them to list places they have visited, jobs they have had, unique experiences in their lives. Later, the teacher invites students with particularly exciting experiences to share them with the class. Assign three to five students to report during a given class period. On that day, one student is assigned to as many groups as there are student speakers. After fifteen minutes, the speakers are rotated. This allows the student to make the same presentation several times during the class period and provides greater interaction between the student speaker and the other members of the class.

97. Special Events

Students should be assigned to prepare talks, skits, recitations, refreshments, etc. for special events (Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, St. Valentine's Day, 5 de mayo, etc.). The only thing the teacher needs to do is (a) make sure all is well-organized, and (b) screen activities to ensure that there is a maximum of conversation.

98. News Report

News items are selected from target language periodicals and given to members of the class. In class, either in groups or as a whole, class members are called upon to retell the news item in their own words. I usually pick news items of social interest or concerning well known figures. At times, the news item is accompanied by a photo. Variation: Have students prepare their own news show in groups.

99. Rumor Game

Six volunteers leave the room. The class is given copies of a brief story. Their task is to jot down changes that occur in the story as it is retold. The first volunteer enters, is told the story, and repeats it to the second student; the second student tells it to the third, and so on. The last person in the chain repeats the story to the entire class. Volunteers may not ask questions about the story or have sections repeated.

100. Jokes

Cut out jokes (cartoons or written) from target language magazines and paste them on sheets of paper. These are circulated from group to group, and students read and discuss the jokes for grammatical and cultural content. Variation: Have students prepare jokes, perhaps translated from English, and share them with the group or class.

101. Recitations

Assign three to six students to memorize poems, songs, dramatic readings, etc. The readings should have content that can be discussed by students in groups. Have students spend five to ten minutes in each group and then rotate to a new group.

102. Impromptu Speeches

Students write a topic on a note card and turn it in to the instructor. The teacher shuffles the cards, and students then pick a card and give a short, impromptu speech on that topic.

103. Debates

Divide the class into four groups, and assign students to judge the different debates and declare winners. Allow a certain period of time for formal opening arguments and for rebuttal.

104. Forum Discussions

These may be leaderless or leader-oriented. Avoid having each member make a pleasant, pat, little speech and then lapse into silence; try for interaction of ideas. Forum participants could be assigned roles, e.g., if the topic were abortion, one could be a Catholic priest, another an unwed mother-to-be, another a mother of one child, another a woman who can't have children, another a social worker.

105. Informal Student-Selected Talks

Assign four or five students to prepare a ten-minute presentation on any topic they desire. One may choose to speak of her trip last summer, another to show art objects that he has made or that are momentos of a trip, another to talk about her family and show pictures of them. Students are divided into groups with one speaker per group. After five minutes, speakers rotate to a new group.

106. The Zodiac

Students are given descriptions of persons born under the various signs. They are asked (a) to tell what the zodiac says they should be like, according to their date of birth. (b) They then agree or disagree with the description given. (c) They then think of someone else (mother, father, brother, sister, boy friend, girl friend) and state whether the description corresponds to the person.

107. You Devise

Some of the best conversational activities come from giving students a free rein to create their own conversational activity. I select four to six students and tell them that I want them to come to class next day with a conversational activity that will involve three to five other students for ten to fifteen minutes. The students selected are only conversation leaders and should not monopolize speaking. Students, when left to their own imaginations, are highly inventive and create some great conversational activities.

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